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21 September 2001

Lake H. Barrett, Acting Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office
United States Department of Energy
P.O. Box 30307
North Las Vegas NV 89036-0307

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Dear Mr. Barrett:

This is in response to your request of 28 August 2001 for comments on the Yucca Mountain radioactive waste repository.

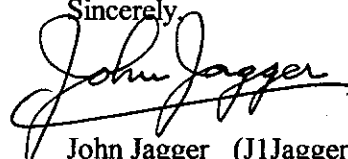
For background, I have a Ph.D. in biophysics from Yale University and spent two post-graduate years at the Radium Institute in Paris, France. I then worked for nine years in the Biology Division of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. I retired in 1986 from my position as Professor of Biology and General Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas. In 1991, I published *The Nuclear Lion: What every Citizen should know about Nuclear Power and Nuclear War* (New York: Plenum Press). I was active in the 90s in the unsuccessful effort to open a low-level radioactive waste repository at Sierra Blanca, TX. I consider myself a biophysicist and radiation biologist.

I believe that the Yucca Mountain Preliminary Site Suitability Evaluation does indeed provide an adequate basis for development of that repository.

If the Secretary of Energy determines that the site will meet applicable radiation protection standards established by the EPA and the NRC, I believe that he should recommend the site to the President.

I have an additional comment. I have always felt that the high-level waste (at least the spent fuel rods) destined for Yucca Mountain should be emplaced in a *retrievable form* if at all possible. It need not be easily retrievable, which could be expensive. But I feel that future generations may decide 1) that the waste can be stored in a more secure place or manner, and/or 2) that the waste may be wanted for extraction of valuable radioisotopes. Furthermore, *if the waste were retrievable, this should go a long way towards alleviating the objections of those sincerely doubtful about the long-term safety of the repository.*

Sincerely



John Jagger (JJJagger@aol.com)